6th August, 2002. Only good quality foodgrains conforming to Prevention of Adulteration Act (PFA) norms are issued to the States and Union Territories for distribution under TPDS and Other Welfare Schemes.

All party meeting on PDS

238. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently an all party meeting was held on the problems of the Public Distribution System;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the follow-up meeting with all the Chief Ministers is also supposed to be held;

(c) if so, the details of the outcome of the discussions that took place in all party meeting;

(d) whether the meeting of all the Chief Ministers was held;

(e) if not, by when it is going to be held; and

(f) what is the reaction of Government to scrap PDS and to adopt universal system of distribution so as ensure that no section of the population is deprived of food?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Representatives of various political parties expressed their views and *inter-alia* gave suggestions for strengthening/improving the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in the country like better co-ordination between the Central and State Governments, strengthening and increasing the viability of the Fair Price Shops, checking diversion, decentralized procurement of foodgrains, proper identification of beneficiaries, reduction of the Central Issue Price for APL category etc.

(d) and (e) Yes Sir. No date has yet been finalized for this meeting.

(f) The Targeted Public Distribution System was introduced in June, 1997 with a view to target the unprivileged sections of the Society, as the earlier universal PDS did not adequately focus on the poor and had an urban bias. It is felt that the introduction of Universal PDS would result in

the PDS losing its focus in meeting the needs of the poor and disadvantaged specially in the rural, hilly, tribal and far flung areas.

Embargo on export of foodgrains

239. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to put an embargo on the export of grains;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government have decided to pay compensation to exporters who have release orders for grains from the Food Corporation of India;

(d) if so, the amount to be paid to the exporters who were hit by the embargo; and

(e) the factors that prompted Government to take the decision to put an embargo?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Quality of electrical gadgets

240. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is getting a lot of complaints regarding inferior quality of household electrical gadgets, usually non-ISI marks or otherwise of inferior quality, which at times become life hazards;

(b) if so, how many electrical gadgets are having ISI marks and what is the percentage thereof; and

(c) whether Government are thinking it making mandatory for daily-use electrical gadgets to have ISI certification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) Taking congnizance of complaints received from consumers/consumer organizations regarding marketing of low